

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments and following comments is courteously solicited.

Independent claim 4 has been drafted so as to set forth with specificity the critical features of the present invention and to comply with the formal requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, both first and second paragraphs. It is submitted that claim 4 patentably defines over the cited and applied prior art for the reasons set forth hereinbelow.

Independent claim 4 sets forth a net which is secured to the frame wherein the net comprises a plurality of polypropylene strands forming a cross-linked area to allow for adsorption of medium and high viscosity hydrocarbons. The adsorption is attributable to the polypropylene strands. Contrary to the foregoing, the cited and applied U.S. Patent 5,403,478 does not use polypropylene strands. As set forth in column 5 lines 34 through 38 of the '478 document, the fibers of the '478 material are polyester or nylon. The article of the '478 patent absorbs oil based fluid on the surface. There is no adsorption in the '478 patent as polypropylene strands are not used rather nylon strands.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that newly submitted independent claim 4 patentably defines over the '478 document whether taken alone or in combination with the other cited documents.

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the

Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

It is submitted that the claims as amended herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

If any fees are required in connection with this case, it is respectfully requested that they be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-0184.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: August 11, 2008